

TUITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

The Tuition Assistance Program encourages and supports the continuing education and training of employees. The program is designed to encourage attendance at credit courses and degree programs offered by accredited institutions and job relevant vocational courses. The program provides reimbursement for pre-approved courses that are intended to enhance job-relevant skills and contribute to the employee's career growth at the Laboratory.

WHO IS ELIGIBLE FOR THE TUITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM?

Active Employees

All regular employees who work at least 20 hours per week are eligible to participate in the Tuition Assistance Program on the first day of active employment.

ENROLLMENT

Eligible employees may enroll in the Tuition Assistance Program by completing a Tuition Assistance Request form which is available through the Tuition Office or online at www.bnl.gov/HR/Staffdev/tuition.asp.

TUITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM COVERAGE

Benefits Provided

The program provides reimbursement for all or part of the tuition fee paid upon successful completion of a formal course of study. Reimbursement is restricted to out-of-pocket tuition costs actually incurred by the employee.

Regular full-time employees are eligible for 9 credits per semester for three semesters per year. Regular part-time employees are eligible for a maximum of 4 credits per semester for three semesters per year. The maximum reimbursement provided by the program is \$4,000 per semester for full-time employees and \$2,000 per semester for part-time employees.

For undergraduate, correspondence or vocational level courses, reimbursement is 75% of the tuition cost.

Upon receipt of a baccalaureate degree, reimbursement may be made for the 25% difference between the previously reimbursed 75% and 100% of tuition costs. This reimbursement is made only for courses required for the degree and taken within ten years of receipt of the degree.

For graduate level courses, reimbursement is 100% of the tuition cost.

Allowable Courses

Courses must (a) be pertinent to the work that the employee is doing or may reasonably be expected to do or (b) be required for a degree in a field of study pertinent to the work of the Laboratory. Courses must begin and be completed while employed by the Laboratory.

Exclusions

The Tuition Assistance Program does not provide reimbursement for:

- College fees.
- Registration charges.
- Books.
- Any items other than out-of-pocket tuition costs.
- Short courses, workshops, or seminars for which continuing education units may be earned.

Approvals

For a course to be eligible for reimbursement it must be approved, by signatures, on the Tuition Assistance Request form. Approvals must include (a) the employee's Supervisor, and (b) the employee's Department Chair, Division Manager, or designee.

How to Request Reimbursement

To request reimbursement for an approved course, the employee must satisfactorily complete the course, normally with a grade of "C" or equivalent or better. Proof of payment, bursar's receipt, paid invoice from the school, or payment report from the school website and a copy of the final grade report from the college or university must be submitted to the Tuition Office. Request for reimbursement must be submitted within 12 months of course completion.

Advance tuition is also available. If a tuition advance is requested, it will be considered an advance until proof of payment and a final grade report are submitted to the Tuition Office.

The employee must repay the tuition advance immediately if the employee:

- Does not complete the course(s) with a grade "C" or equivalent or better; or
- Does not submit the required documentation within 60 days after the completion date of the course(s); or
- Drops or withdraws from a class; or

- Terminates employment with the Laboratory before completing course(s). Advances must be repaid to the Laboratory prior to their termination date.

Questions About the Program

If you have a question about the Tuition Assistance Program, contact the Tuition Office.

MISCELLANEOUS

Course Schedules

Course schedules should not interfere with the employee's work attendance.

General Information

Information regarding the plan identification number, plan year, plan funding, type of plan, plan sponsor, plan administrator, agent for legal process, your rights under ERISA, prudent actions by plan fiduciaries, and modification, suspension, or termination of the plan can be found in the General Information section of this booklet.

Leave of Absence

The Tuition Assistance Program will not provide reimbursement of tuition costs during an approved Leave of Absence.

Participants Receiving Long Term Disability Benefits

Employees who are receiving Long Term Disability Plan benefits are not eligible for the Tuition Assistance Program.

Termination of Coverage

Tuition Assistance Program coverage will cease on the earlier of the date your employment terminates or the date you are no longer eligible for coverage. Tuition advances must be repaid prior to an employee's termination date unless he or she is part of a layoff. If employment is terminated due to a layoff and the employee is approved for and attending a one-semester course, the employee will be eligible for reimbursement at the completion of the course even though he or she is no longer employed. Normal refund and pre-payment procedures and requirements will apply.